that the employees of different establishments are not getting their yearly P F. statement and account slips regularly;

(b) whether it is a fact that non-refundable loan and P. F. final settlement are not being processed properly;

(c) whether Government have received any complaint in this regard;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof, and

(e) what steps are being taken by Government to see that the employees are not harassed by the P. F. offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) The Government is aware of large pendency in the issue of annual statement of accounts;

(b) During the year 1984-85, 5,02,279 porvident fund claims amounting to Rs. 268.27 crores and 2,96,360 applications for withdrawals amounting to Rs. 82.40 crores, were settled. However, the pendency both in case of non-refundable claims cases and final settlement of cases remains considerable.

(c) to (e) A joint letter signed by some Honourable M.P. stating *inter alia* that the RPFC's office in Calcutta was not functioning properly and that there were delays in settlement of claims, issue of annual statement of accounts, etc. was received recently. A new RPFC has since been posted in Calcutta and he has been instructed to make special efforts to gear up the administration and to take steps for expeditious settlement of pending claims, etc. This position is being regularly monitored and it is expected that there will be considerable improvement as a result of the administrative changes and streamlining of procedures.

Relief from payment of Excise Duty sought for by Industries

1074. SHRI DIPEN GHOSH:
SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as recession is setting in the country, industries both in the large and small scale sectors, have started laying off of labour and have suspended the lifting of goods against orders placed earlier and also have approached Government for relief from excise duty;

(b) if so, how Government propose to combat the situation;

(c) whether plea for cuts in excise duty is going to be granted; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) A significant increase in industrial production and revenue realisation during 1985-86 over the corresponding months of 1984-85 clearly shows that there is evidence of recession in the economy. However, production in individual industries and units, as well as demand and supply of different products, are influenced by a variety of factors operating from time to time. There has been no demand for excise duty relief in general on this account.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

हथकरघा क्षेत्र के लिये आरक्षित वस्तुएं

1075. **श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव** : क्या वस्त्र मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) नई वस्त्र नीति में हथकरघा क्षेत्र के लिये आरक्षित वस्तुओं और पुरानी वस्त्र नीति में हथकरघा क्षेत्र के लिये आरक्षित बारह वस्तुओं के वास्तविक मूल्य तथा बाजार मूल्य में क्या अन्तर है; और

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि नई वस्त्र नीति के प्रवर्तन के कारण हथकरघा क्षेत्र को कठिनाई पेश आ रही है, यदि हां, तो इस क्षेत्र के लिये केवल दस वस्तुओं के आरक्षण से इसको क्या लाभ पहुंचेगा ?

वस्त्र मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री खुर्शीद आलम खान) : (क) नए आरक्षण अधिनियम के अन्तर्गत हथकरघा क्षेत्र में पूरी तरह उत्पादन के लिए बाईस मदों को आरक्षित किया गया है । आरक्षित मदों के लिए कोई कीमतें निर्धारित नहीं की जाती हैं और इस लिए बाजार कीमत तथा वास्तविक कीमत के बीच अन्तर का प्रश्न नहीं उठता ।

(ख) नई वस्त्र नीति लागू होने से हथकरघा क्षेत्र को पैदा होने वाली कठिनाई के सम्बन्ध में भारत सरकार को राज्यों से कोई विशेष रिपोर्टें प्राप्त नहीं हुई हैं । हथकरघा क्षेत्र में उत्पादन के लिए 22 मदों के आरक्षण से इन मदों के सम्बन्ध में अन्य क्षेत्रों से प्रतियोगिता समाप्त करके इन उत्पादों के विपणन में मदद मिलेगी, इस प्रकार उत्पादन में वृद्धि होगी और इससे हथकरघा बुनकरों के लिए बेहतर आय तथा रोजगार सुनिश्चित होगा ।

Tripartite Study Group of fishermen

1076. PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has constituted a Tripartite Study Group on Fishermen to look into their working and living conditions;

(b) if so, what are the names of the members of the above Study Group;

(c) what are the terms of reference thereof; and

(d) by when the report is likely to be submitted by the Group?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are given in the Statement. (See below).

(c) The terms of reference are as under:—

(i) To identify the different types of fishing boats as well as different categories of fishermen, nature of operations, their working and living conditions, such as hours of work, accidents, fishing equipment used, wages/remunerations payable, existing facilities available to the fishermen under housing, drinking water, medical aid, scholarships to children etc. and the extent to which they are availing themselves of these benefits;

(ii) to study existing legislative provisions which are applicable to the fishermen (both wage employed and self-employed) and the difficulties which may have arisen from time to time in the implementation of the statutory provisions; and

(iii) to consider and formulate the details of legislative and administrative measures including constitution of a welfare fund, by levy of cess on the manufacturers/export houses as may be considered necessary for improving the working and living conditions of fishermen.

(d) A National Welfare Fund for Fishermen has been constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture and the State Governments are taking steps to improve the working and living conditions of fishermen. In view of this, it was felt that no useful purpose would be served by continuing the Study Group. It has, therefore, been decided that the Study Group should be wound up. The notification in this regard is being published.